Under the Mistletoe by brodie-wan

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Summary: In which teens El and Mike have a some spare time at the cabin. Cocoa, kisses, and the constant of each other are in residence. Fluffy Mileven. My first. Be kind.

Under the Mistletoe

A/N: This fic is for 'SmoothFluffle', who has an awesome prompt thread. I asked her what she would like to see and she said 'teen mileven playing in the snow, drinking hot chocolate, and cold kisses under the mistletoe'. I hope she got some of what she wanted.

Under the Mistletoe

Mike Wheeler wasn't easily embarrassed, but the mere fact that he had mistletoe jammed into his coat pocket was making him nervous. He was only moments from the cabin and though his 'new' 1979 Honda Accord was giving him confidence, perhaps not enough to put one past the Chief. He was hyper observant, especially when it came to Mike and El. His seemingly clairvoyant powers had been ruinous when it came to Mike's end runs.

Stepping from the car, Mike noticed Hopper standing on the front porch holding a snow shovel. The front of the cabin had already been cleared, but if history served, the man would ask Mike to shovel the driveway before spending time with El. He waved at Hopper as he approached, desperately trying to keep the color from his cheeks.

"You feeling ok, Mike," Hopper asked, setting the shovel against a porch beam.

"Just fine, Chief," he replied, meeting the man's eyes. "I took the last corner a little wide and almost hit a tree."

"Hmmm," Hopper said, skeptically. "Gotta be present behind the wheel, Kid. Can't be reading comic books while you're driving."

"Yes, sir," Mike replied, respectfully, while inwardly cursing himself for lying his way into another possible limitation with El. "Safety first."

"You up for a little work today," Hopper asked, a mischievous grin playing on his lips.

"You know it," Mike retorted.

"Nah," Hopper said. "Not this time. I'll give you a reprieve. El has been looking forward to seeing you and I won't keeping her waiting."

"Really?" Miked said, surprised. "Thanks, Chief."

"Don't worry about. You kids have fun. Something I will not be having running errands with Joyce."

Mike was dumbfounded. Hopper was not making him work and he was leaving them alone. This was not normal. This was unprecedented.

"You're...leaving?" Mike stammered.

"Yeah," Hopper said, enjoying Mike's confusion. "Duty calls. You'll learn soon enough."

Mike, fingered the Mistletoe in coat pocket visions of sugar plums, or at least El's flushed cheeks, dancing in his head.

"Yeah," Mike replied, absently. "I guess I will."

"Mike," Hopper said, suddenly serious. He put his hands on Mike's shoulder. "Don't make me or you regret this."

"I won't."

Hopper opened the Bronco door and before climbing in, said: "Be safe." He shook his head immediately. "Be good, I mean." He pinned Mike with stare that was meaningful without being threatening. He nodded.

Mike returned the nod and Hopper was gone. He turned and approached the cabin, still giving the secret knock that El though him three years ago. The door opened and he entered. El was nowhere to be seen, but there were only a couple places she could be.

"I'll be out in a minute," came El's voice from the bathroom. Mystery solved.

Mike removed the Mistletoe from his coat and quickly hung it over the front door frame and moved by the couch to wait for her.

When she emerged from the bathroom, he was struck by her natural beauty. Her brown hair and eyes and immaculate face were now three years older and she was a little wiser in the ways of the world. But, for Mike and El time traveled at a slower pace. She still loved to wear overalls, which she had on now, with light pink long sleeve underneath. The white bunny slippers he had given her for Christmas last year covered her feet.

"Hey you," he said, coming to her and pulling her into his arms. They kissed passionately, but briefly as couples do when they haven't seen each other for a while. She hugged him as was her practice, long and hard, like she might never see him again. It had been this way since the night she came back into his life, the night she closed the gate on The Mind Flayer. Mike never tired of this special hug. In fact, he returned it with the same voracity with which she gave it. He never wanted her to doubt him. His love. His devotion. His protection. It was odd to think she needed him to protect her. In many ways she didn't. She was strong with the Force, literally, but there was more to her than her brute strength. More than could be handled by brute strength alone.

"I missed you," she said to his chest. "I'm glad you're here."

He pulled back from her and looked into her eyes. "Are you okay? Did you fight with Hopper?"

She screwed up her face in consternation. "No, Mike. No fight. I'm just glad to see you.

She moved around him and went to kitchen where the ancient tea kettle had just started whistling. He should have known hot chocolate would be on the menu today. Much like her fascination with Eggos (still a thing), El had taken to hot chocolate like a vampire to blood as soon as she had been introduced to it during their first Christmas together. Hopper was still keeper her a secret that year, but he had also loosened reins on visits from 'the family' (those who were aware of and fought the demogorgon and the Mind Flayer). Mike remembered her look of amazement, pure joy mixed with wonder and fascination.

"Dad will be back later," she said, taking the tea kettle and pouring

piping hot water into two already prepared coffee mugs. "I wish you would stop calling him Hopper. He's my dad. You can say 'Your dad, you know."

She stirred both mugs as he watched the little chalky marshmallows spin in the whirlpool. He saw the torn Swiss Miss packets pushed aside and suppressed a groan. Like waffles, he had tried to explain that there were better versions than popular commercial brands. He had even given her specialty hot chocolate as a gift which was no doubt sitting untouched in the cupboard.

"I know," he replied, nonchalantly. "It's just weird. Still weird. Maybe, some day, I'll call him Jim, if he let's me."

She snorted and handed him a mug. "I don't mind what you call him when you talk to him, but when you talk to me, call him dad."

Mike was surprised by the seriousness of the moment. "Okay, El. It's dad from now on."

She cupped the mug in her hands letting the warmth bleed into them. "Now, drink. Even if you think my favorite beverage in the whole wide world tastes like, what did you call it, 'dirty water.'"

Mike sucked in a breath as if caught in some dastardly act, but not really. He shrugged his shoulders and said: "Friends don't lie."

She playfully socked him in the shoulder, and beckoned him to follow her to the couch. They sat together, under a quilt that Joyce had given El that first Christmas. It was warm. The cocoa was warm. The fire, which was always going, was hot. His nearness to El, which was nothing new, started to make him ache. She placed a hand, a warm hand, only moments ago on her mug, on his thigh. The aching just got worse. All of this hand happened in a couple of minutes and was completely wordless. Mike's visions were no longer longer of El flushed cheeks and and neck, but of Hopp...er, her dad, marching him into the woods at gun point. He shot up from the couch so fast he almost spilled his hot cocoa, which he wished he had.

"Mike, what's wrong?" El asked, startled. "Are you okay?"

"Not really," he replied, frantically. "I need some air."

She looked at him quizzically. "Sit down. You're acting weird. This isn't the first time we've been alone together."

"I know," he replied, wiping his sweaty palms on his jeans. "But, I promised. I promised *your dad* we would be good."

She stayed seated, still looking at his like he had grown horns. "Oh really? Guess what? So did I! You don't have the, uh, mono...monorp...you aren't the only one who can be good. Putting my hand on your thigh doesn't mean I'm going after your...your...penis!"

Mike burst out in nervous laughter.

El tried not to laugh, keeping her trembling lips closed with effort. Her told him she wasn't angry. She took a sip of her hot chocolate.

He sat down next to her, replacing the quilt over her legs. "You might have been going for my...my penis, but my penis was going for you."

In her own fit of laughter, the cocoa shot from her nose and mouth onto Mike's shirt and chin. She continued laughing and he joined in. After a moment, leaned into her, cupping her face in his hands and kissed her hard. His hand moved into her curls and hers to his neck to pull him closer. Tongues swirled and chocolate mashed on hot lips.

Then, it was over.

"Get your coat," he whispered, their lips still touching.

"Right," she agreed. "We need to cool off."

After coats, scarves, and boots were managed, the two headed for the door. As he opened it, he looked up at Mistletoe.

"What's that?" he asked, playing dumb. "Did Ho-your dad put it up there?"

"No," was her simple response.

"Maybe he wanted to surprise Ms. Byers?" Mike tried.

El had learned to tap her foot, especially when lies as transparent as these were about. "Not Ms. Byers, Mike. Now Kiss me so we can get on with out walk."

Mike shook his head in wonder at how well she knew him. He pulled her close, kissed her full on the mouth and walked away toward the nearby trail without taking her hand. In fact, he started to run, hoping she would follow. He should have know better. He got maybe five or six step away before an avalanche of snow fell on his head. He sat up, bewildered, and saw his girlfriend approaching with a self satisfied smirk. A thin trial of blood tricked from her nose to her lips.

"Nice try," she said, offering him a hand up.

When he was on his feet, he brushed the blood from her lips and kissed her again, the faintest taste of iron on his lips.

"Can't blame on a guy for trying," he replied, cheekily.

She grabbed his arm and pulled him along the trail. She pulled him a lot. He did not mind a bit.